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A Guide to Effective Participation in the Public Hearing on the Draft Class 3 RCRA/HSWA Permit Modification for the Chevron/Texaco Site, Lockport

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) often decides to conduct a public hearing when there is significant public interest in one or more draft permits it has prepared. A public hearing on the draft Class 3 permit modification that Illinois EPA has proposed for the Chevron/Texaco site is scheduled for **6:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 16, 2002 at the Lockport Township High School, Central Campus Auditorium, 1222 S. Jefferson in Lockport**. This modification would allow Chevron Environmental Services Company to construct and operate a Corrective Action Management Unit (CAMU) to contain remediation wastes generated by the site and to establish a site-wide Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ) during ongoing corrective action work. Authorization of the GMZ would not relieve Chevron from meeting the most stringent (Class 1) groundwater quality standards/objectives at the site perimeter.

At the Hearing

The purpose of this hearing is to collect public comments for Illinois EPA's consideration before making final decisions on the draft RCRA Class 3 permit modification for the Chevron/Texaco site. You are not required to verbalize your comments; written comments are given equal consideration and may be submitted to the Illinois EPA at any time within the public comment period. The comment period ends on August 15, 2002.

In order to make your comments as valuable as possible, please review the Chevron/Texaco application materials and the Illinois EPA's draft permit modification, copies of which are available at the Des Plaines Public Library District--Lockport Public Library.

All public hearings are conducted in an orderly manner and will be recessed or closed if members of the audience attempt to disrupt the proceedings. An Illinois EPA hearing officer is in charge of the proceedings and a court reporter is present to transcribe all statements for the official hearing record. Speakers are also asked to provide a written copy of any lengthy testimony to the Illinois EPA.

An Illinois EPA permit hearing usually consists of the following steps:

- **REGISTRATION** Everyone who plans to testify is encouraged to register at the entrance before the hearing officially begins. Registration ensures that you will be notified by mail of the Illinois EPA permit decision and that you will either receive a copy of the response summary or

you will be sent a notice of its availability at the repository. The response summary is a document which describes the Agency's final decision and contains written responses to the questions raised at the hearing and within the comment period.

- **OPENING STATEMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF ILLINOIS EPA STAFF** The Illinois EPA hearing officer will explain the purpose, rules and agenda of the hearing and introduce the hearing panel.
- **EXPLANATION OF PERMIT(S) & PROGRAM** Illinois EPA staff will present a brief overview of the permitting program and the current draft permit modification proposed for the facility.
- **(OPTIONAL) PERMITTEE STATEMENT** An opportunity is provided for the Permittee to make a brief presentation concerning the modification request.
- **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS** At this time persons may ask the hearing panel questions about the proposed permit and the Illinois EPA's review process. Please be brief so that everyone may have the opportunity to question the panel.
- **PUBLIC TESTIMONY** Persons who have registered and requested to testify will be called upon in turn to make a statement. Statements must address the specific proposed permit or modification to the permit and the panel may question speakers after giving oral testimony. No one may be interrupted or harassed while making a statement. If a large number of people wish to speak, the hearing officer may set time limits for each speaker. Any person whose time runs out may submit comments in writing. The Illinois EPA urges you to prepare and submit your comments in writing in order to maintain continuity of thought and to remember all important facts. If anyone before you has already presented testimony that is contained in your written comments, please skip over those issues when you testify. Your written comments, whether or not you make them aloud, will become part of the official hearing record and will be considered in making the final permit decisions. Speakers are not required to remain at the hearing after making their statements.
- **CLOSE OF HEARING** After all questions and comments have been made, or at the announced ending time of the hearing, the hearing officer will officially close the public hearing and remind everyone of the deadline for mailing written comments.

After the Hearing

You may send written comments to the hearing officer after the public hearing. Comments must be postmarked by midnight August 15, 2002. Send written comments to:

William Seltzer, Hearing Officer (#21)
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
1021 North Grand Ave., East, P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

The Illinois EPA will consider all comments received at the hearing and during the comment period prior to making its final permit modification decision. A response summary that describes the Illinois EPA's final decision and answers the questions and concerns posed by the public will be developed and either mailed to everyone who has submitted written comments and registered at the hearing, or notice will be sent of its availability at the repository. The response summary will also be available upon request to any other interested persons.

Tips for Affecting Illinois EPA Decisions

Your purpose for making verbal comments at a public hearing is to provide information to the Illinois EPA regarding your concerns about the proposed permit decision. However, a public hearing is not a referendum--1000 people making the same comment do not make the comment 1000 times more important. Relevant comments may include specific statements about the permit application and proposed permit or information indicating that the operation of the facility poses a potential threat to human health or the environment. Unsupported opinions are less effective than specific facts and technical documentation.

Examples of Topics that Can Influence This Permit Modification Decision:

- Illinois EPA review process and procedures
- Corrective Action Management Unit design and other technical issues
- Issuance of permits would violate the Environmental Protection Act or regulations.

Examples of Topics that May Not be Considered by the Illinois EPA:

- Property values, zoning issues, design aesthetics
- Waste management issues or permit issues not covered by this permit modification
- Issues that are the responsibility of other governmental bodies, not the Illinois EPA

In general, issues that are beyond the scope of the Illinois EPA's permitting authority cannot be considered in making the final permit decision.

Please Keep in Mind. . .

Petitions and form letters are not effective. The Illinois EPA is required by law to make its permitting decisions based upon the technical merits of the permit applications. The permit requirements and decisions are determined by state and federal environmental regulations.

The Illinois EPA does not support or defend applications for permits. The Agency does defend the process and regulations under which its staff reviews them. Comments from the public that can be incorporated into permit decisions are welcome.

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